

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Digital Repository

---

Volume 2 | Number 8

Article 4

---

1922

## Art, As Frank Alvah Parsons Sees It

Viola Jammer

*Iowa State College*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Jammer, Viola (1922) "Art, As Frank Alvah Parsons Sees It," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 2 : No. 8 , Article 4.

Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol2/iss8/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [digirep@iastate.edu](mailto:digirep@iastate.edu).

# Marie Reviews Fifth Avenue

By MILDRED BOYT

New York, N. Y.

DEAR HARRIET:

The styles are so lovely this year I can't resist telling you all about them. How lucky you are to be getting your trousseau now when the styles are so well adapted for traveling.

A trip down Fifth Avenue is an education in itself. Every well-dressed woman is in black—black not only up to the eyes, but over them! All black! Dresses are made for the most part of Canton crepe. All are very long waisted, and the newer ones have no waist lines at all. The dress fits snugly over the bust and waist down to the hips, where it flares enough to make a comfortably full skirt.

The sleeves are of all shapes. Some are very short. Most of them are full, or three-quarter lengths. Some very stunning ones hang longer underneath, a few of them coming nearly to the bottom of the skirt. Some sleeves start at the waist line, and all are very large. In fact, this seems to be the year of sleeves—if one's sleeves are "right," one's costume is correct.

Skirts are, of course, long. Here in New York the popular length is three inches from the ground, altho in other eastern cities nine and ten inches are seen more. Many hems are uneven, hanging longer on the sides. Then the popular coat dress hangs shorter in front. Many skirts are draped or caught up on the side, thus making an irregular hem line.

Some lovely new frocks of leaf brown are now being shown in the windows. Many of the velvet dresses are trimmed in fur. A charming one is of black velvet trimmed with bands of Persian lamb on the skirt. The high collar is also of the fur, as are the cuffs which end the long, tight-fitting sleeves. This dress is one of the newer, no waist-line models, and is as chick as any I have seen.



Every feminine eye will be pleased with the variety of attractive underwear displayed in the shop windows this season!

Although black is all one sees on the Avenue, the shop windows are showing everything but black. Golden brown and leaf brown, and some unusual shades of henna seem to be the newest. Dresses made of these colors are trimmed with all-over Indian beading, and although very heavy, are extremely pretty. Hats also are being shown in these shades, and combinations of them adorn the newer beaded bags. By the way, your trousseau will not be complete without a beaded bag. They can be gotten in lovely colors that harmonize with all the fall shades, and they make such an attractive spot of color with an all-black costume.

Some evening dresses are black, but the most interesting are of very bright colors. One sees many gorgeous feather fans. These match the bright gowns and make spots of interest for the black ones. A two-tone blue of straight eagle quills is especially beautiful.

As for shoes—the very low heel has completely gone out, and in its place we have either the military or Spanish. With the long skirts one usually sees French or Spanish heels. Shoes are fashioned of satin, patent or kid, and some of the very new ones are of suede. Shoe men

all tell you that suede is the coming thing, but as yet we have seen little of it. Many combinations of kid and patent, and satin and patent are shown. The sensible oxfords we wore last fall cannot be purchased this year. In fact, very few oxfords of any kind are to be seen. The strapped pumps we wore all summer seem to be the vogue this fall also, with but few variations. The Russian boots you wrote about are not worn here. I have seen but a few pairs.

Every feminine eye will be pleased with the variety of attractive underwear displayed in the shop windows this season. Neg-

ligee is daintily colored, and of filmy soft stuffs, and yet so trim and tastily designed that it appeals equally to the business woman or the debutante. Don't neglect a chance to get some of these more than attractive pieces for your trousseau.

Of course I must not overlook hats. To me the hat shops are the most attractive of any, this year especially so. The shapes this season seem to suit every style of face and figure. And if care is used in the selection, a hat may look as though it had grown on one! Very large picture hats are worn in the restaurants, theatres, and even on the street. Many of these are trimmed with glycerined ostrich feathers. Small hats are still very good, and are made of brighter colored materials. These are also trimmed with feathers and quills. A popular way is a group of feathers on one side, drooping over the brim. Some of the small hats are made of novelty materials and trimmed with the same.

I hope that these ideas may be of some help to you in your selections.

I remain as always,

MARIE.

## Art, As Frank Alvah Parsons Sees It

By VIOLA JAMMER

FRANK ALVAH PARSON, president of the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts, and one of this country's most recognized authorities on Interior Decoration and Costume Design, addressed Iowa State College students at two lectures, October 30 and November 2.

In his first lecture on the "Psychology of Art in Dress," President Parson said, "People must study how to dress, in order to know what to wear, just as one must study music, in order to play an instrument. Just now there is a big chance to do constructive work. The war has destroyed many things which were in

the way of progress and left a field open for clear thinking and action.

"Psychology is all the rage now. First, because people don't know what it is, and second, when they find it out, it is merely the study of what is in their heads and how it got there. Things are taken into consciousness thru our five senses, the greatest of these being sight. Everyone has an aesthetic sense, an appetite for beauty, which, if not used, starves.

"Home Economics grew from a need. Seventeen years ago, the New York School of Fine and Applied Art offered the first course in Interior Decoration;

now there are ninety colleges and many art schools.

"Art is an answer to a need which must govern our selection. Anything, really artistic, must be fit for use. Accordingly, there are three reasons for wearing clothes: shelter, sense of privacy and attraction. Clothes should not be attractive to startle attention, but to show personality. The lines of our clothes and the proportions are made according to the figure. When decoration is applied, it is intended to attract attention, where one is called to look.

"Art is also a matter of color. When

color speaks favorably, it is artistic. The amount, or area of color used expresses taste."

In conclusion, President Parson said, "When the principle of art is applied to clothes, instead of public fashion, then will clothing be the expression of art."

On November 2, in his address on "Art, Education and Industrial Outlook," President Parson said, "Artistic appreciation comes from a study of simple details which arouses reaction, growing into something larger."

"Education," he said, "is the adjustment of an individual to an environment; as time changes the process of education must change also. We are living in a commercial and educational age. No longer are antique textiles and furniture being formulated by the brain and put together by the hands—works valued for

their expression of individuality. All commercial articles today are machinery made, losing all personality." Manual training is taught in the public schools with the purpose of recreating this lost art, but there is a need for head work, as well as for hands.

Things, today, are made for the standard tastes of the masses. When they have the two where-with-alls, brains and dollars, to improve the situation, then will design be beautiful and fit. The objects must be in the public minds before the designers can create them. Institutions are training their people to better their tastes in relation to public and private life, since environment is the greatest teacher. As President Parson expresses it, "Man is practically what he lives in," or, "We will do the state of mind we're in."

The laws of decoration applied in art as we think of them today really date to the time of Leonardo de Vinci, who formulated the following:

1. Balance is the chief requisite of any form of art.

2. Any object is decorative only as long as it does not interfere with use.

3. Decoration should follow structure and add strength and beauty.

4. Decoration should be consistent thruout.

The intensity, or the lightness and darkness of color is very important, since color tells the story.

In closing, President Parson said, "There will be no art this century, except that expressed in life. It will come from the public, and be established by the precedent in homes."

## Costuming and Its Relation to the Individual

By MARION B. GARDNER, Instructor of Home Economics

HAVE you ever noticed the "costuming" of cartoon comic supplement characters? Indeed! who would wear such clothes? The lanky Andy Gump who wears a "No man's collar" is ridiculously garbed for his campaign. His Prince Albert, vividly striped trousers and inevitable "stove pipe" elongate his gaunt figure. To complete the picture, there is a three-inch collar which almost interferes with his hearing. The names of Mutt and Jeff recall similar exaggeration of physical peculiarities by costuming.

When people use these same devices, unknowingly, in their selection of wearing apparel, the result is not ridiculous but lamentable. The basic rules for appropriateness in dress are simple. To select proper apparel one must first realize the proportions of one's figure.

In the class in costume design, the young women of the classes have photographs made of themselves. To secure the exact outline of the figure and in order to achieve the greatest contrast against the grey background of the negative, the girls wear white, close-fitting undergarments when photographed. Just as an architect must visualize and consider all elevations of a house, so must the costume designer imagine and construct a garment that is harmonious from various angles. Front view and side-back view pictures are therefore taken.

When the photograph is developed, the

figure is next traced with a hard pencil from the negative which is held at the light to insure exactness in outline. From the tracing paper the figure is transferred to white drawing paper of a size suitable for a sketch. Now, the fundamental decision must be made which will control all future selections of outer apparel. Into which of these three types small, tall, or stout, does the figure come? The type determines the most suitable lines to be striven for in designing.

A small figure naturally requires lines that give both width and height. Almost everyone realizes that a small bungalow with a wide arch between the living and dining rooms requires the same color treatment of walls and rugs in order to give the effect of an unbroken expanse. Yet many small women constantly wear blouses and skirts of contrasting color. Since anything which breaks the vertical line is to be avoided, tiered or ruffled skirts should not be considered.

Two-tone dresses, where the contrasting material is used for deep-set sleeves and for side paneling, tend to give width. By being careful that her foot gear and head gear harmonize with her costume a small woman can add much to her height.

The tall woman's problem is the reverse of that of her smaller sister, for she desires to clip her height and consequently must strive for horizontal lines in her costume. She may consider her-

self fortunate today if her shoulders are narrow, for then the fashionable bertha will become her. Flat Peter Pan collars obligingly shorten the neck if she will wear her hair low. How envious the smaller woman is of the queenly height which permits the wearing of large hats.

And the stout woman, that harassed person whom "no-body-loves—" what may she wear? Vertical lines must be her creed. The embryo orator's formula for emphasis—"the same thing over and over again, only louder each time—" can apply here. If the stout woman will repeat the vertical line in her hat, her coiffure, her neck line and in the basic construction of the garment, she will sustain the illusion of height.

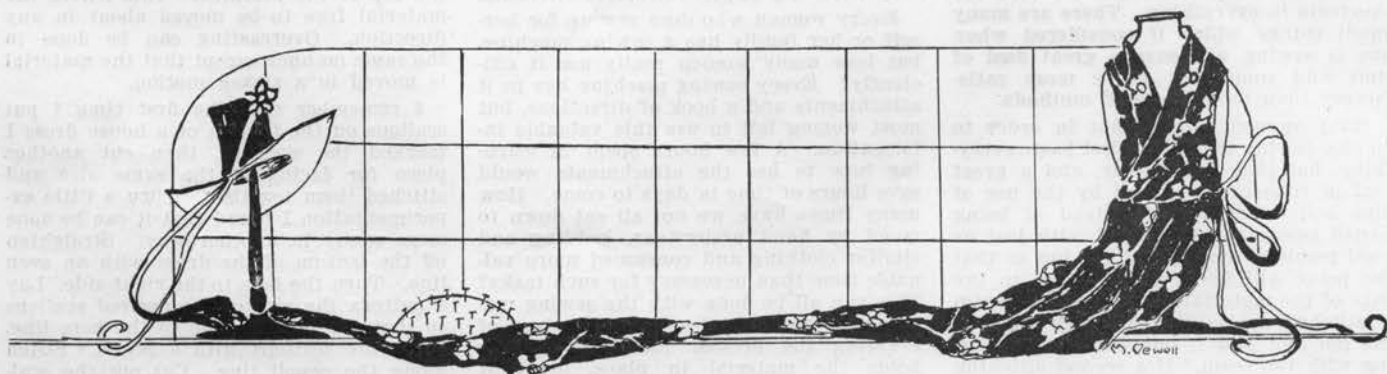
The majority of the present-day materials adapt themselves better to certain types than to others. The many varied crepes and other soft materials are most suitable for the stout figure, while the taller and shorter slender figures may wear taffeta, organdy and stiffer materials as well as the soft.

### AT SET OF SUN

If we sit down at set of sun  
And count the things that we have done,

And counting, find  
One self-deserving act, one word  
That eased the heart of one who heard,

One glance most kind  
That fell like sunshine where it went,  
Then we may count the day well spent.



A pin, a drape or a streamer can add just the individual touch to make a costume "different."